

**OLD BLACKSBURG MIDDLE SCHOOL (OBMS)
TRANSITION COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF DECEMBER 20, 2006**

Present:

Blacksburg

Councilman Paul Lancaster

Kathryn Albright-Citizen Member

Town Manager Marc Verniel

Montgomery County

BoS Member Gary Creed

Gary McCoy-Citizen Member

County Administrator Clay Goodman

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m.

Acceptance of Minutes of November 15, 2006 Meeting

By consensus, the Minutes of the November 15, 2006 meeting were accepted, with one correction.

Townscape Committee-Proposal for Design Competition

Sara Thorne-Thomsen and Donna Dunay, members of the Townscape Committee, made a presentation on their proposal for a design competition for the use of the OBMS property.

To take best advantage of the landmark site and buildings of the OBMS, the Townscape Committee proposed to make a key to the future by weaving multiple disparate needs and desires into a whole by sponsoring a national design competition. The competition would include the tangible and intangible elements of the existing site in relation to surrounding areas and neighborhoods, as identified by citizens and officials.

The process: **Stage 1:** Open to all architects and related professionals, the program description would include all possible uses, relationship to the county and town identity, and civic contribution. A jury of professionals would evaluate the entries and select five finalists to proceed to Stage 2. There would be an exhibition of 20-30 competition entries from Stage 1, including the finalists, and a public forum for review and comment.

Stage 2: The five selected finalists focus on the detail and implementation of their proposals through refinement of their Stage 1 submissions in conjunction with comments from the jury and public forum. Stage 2 submissions would include a development strategy. The jury of professionals would select the First and Second Place proposals.

Citizen Voice: The Townscape Committee proposed to sponsor the competition in cooperation with County, Town and University. Citizen participation would take place in tandem with the process outlined above:

Stage 1: At the outset of this stage, there would be a public meeting to present the competition brief and gather comments to be reviewed, consolidated and included in the program description. At the conclusion of this stage, upon jury selection of the finalists, there would be an exhibition of 20-30 selected entries and a public forum for further comment.

Stage 2: At the conclusion of this stage, the First and Second Place designs would be presented publicly and citizen comments again welcomed.

Recognizing the longstanding interest in this site, the Townscape Committee believes the design competition would offer the opportunity for community support from citizen, neighborhood and business associations.

Mr. McCoy asked what the role of the OBMS Transition Committee would be in a design competition. Ms. Dunay said the proposals would be brought to this group. Mr. Lancaster stressed the importance of parameters in any design competition. Mr. Creed said the Transition Committee is responsible for setting the parameter, and that needs to be done before moving ahead with a competition.

Mr. Creed reiterated his definition of the Committee's goals and objectives which was to create a development plan that would produce the highest income and/or lease revenue for schools, Town and County. Mr. Lancaster agreed, but added the caveat that the development should also be consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan and hopefully would include some civic use at the site.

Discussions included a time line for a design competition and the following was suggested: 1st phase August – December 2007; with completion in the Spring of 2008. Also discussed were monetary awards being offered to competitors. Mr. Creed asked Ms. Dunay and Ms. Thorne-Thomsen who they envisioned to be the jurors in a design competition, and how they would be chosen. Ms. Dunay explained that a slate of jurors would be proposed by the Townscape Committee, and approved by the OBMS Transition Committee. Finalists would meet with the OBMS Transition Committee before a winner is chosen.

Mr. Lancaster pointed out that getting civic groups and citizens involved in the process at the beginning will result in a greater chance of overall satisfaction when the project is complete.

By consensus of the OBMS Transition Committee, Mr. Verniel and Mr. Goodman will prepare a draft of parameters and the role of the OBMS Committee in a design competition, for discussion and approval at the next meeting.

Mr. Lancaster thanked Ms. Dunay and Ms. Thorne-Thomsen for their presentation on a proposed design competition.

Next meeting date

The next meeting of the OBMS Transition Committee will be on Wednesday, January 17, 2007 at 2:00 p.m. in the County Administration conference room.

The meeting adjourned at 2:58 p.m.

Approved: _____
Chairman

Date: _____